

Amendments to the Claims

1-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) In a communication system wherein web content is transmitted over a communication path from a content server to a client station in response to a request from the client station, a method comprising the following functions carried out ~~during transmission of the web content within the communication path, between the content server and the client station~~ while the web content is in transit from the content server to the client station and has thus left the content server but has not yet arrived at the client station:

receiving the web content at an intermediation system in the communication path;
the intermediation system computing a size-based cost to access the received web content;

the intermediation system engaging in interstitial communication with the client station to receive user approval to pay the computed size-based cost; and

after receiving the user approval, the intermediation system sending the web content along the communication path to the client station.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein computing the size-based cost to access the web content comprises:

multiplying a charging-rate by a size of the web content.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein computing the size-based cost to access the web content further comprises:

selecting the charging rate based at least in part on a factor selected from the group consisting of (i) a service level of a user requesting the web content and (ii) a time of day.

7-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) In a communication system wherein web content is transmitted over a communication path from a content server to a client station in response to a request from the client station, the web content defining a hyperlink to be presented by a browser running on the client station, the hyperlink pointing to referenced web content, a method comprising:

~~during transmission of the web content within the communication path, between the content server and the client station while the web content is in transit from the content server to the client station and has thus left the content server but has not yet arrived at the client station,~~
(i) an intermediation system computing a size-based cost to access the referenced web content and
(ii) the intermediation system adding an indication of the size-based cost into the web content, in conjunction with the hyperlink, such that the indication will be presented to a user when the web content is presented to the user.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the communication path extends from the content server, over a packet-switched network, and through an access channel to the client station, the method further comprising:

carrying out at least the adding within the access channel.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

engaging in interstitial communication with the user, to collect user-payment of the size-based cost for the referenced web content.

16. (Currently amended) In a communication system wherein web content is

transmitted over a communication path from a content server to a client station in response a request from the client station, a method comprising, ~~during transmission of the web content within the communication path~~ while the web content is in transit from the content server to the client station and has thus left the content server but has not yet arrived at the client station, the following functions:

an intermediation system receiving the web content;

the intermediation system detecting a hyperlink within the web content, wherein the hyperlink points to referenced web content;

the intermediation system determining a cost of the referenced web content based at least in part on a size of the referenced web content;

the intermediation system adding into the web content, in conjunction with the hyperlink, an indication of the determined cost; and

the intermediation system sending the web content, including the indication, along the communication path to the client station,

whereby the indication will be presented to a user when the web content is presented to the user, thereby giving the user an advanced notice of the cost of the referenced web content.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the communication path comprises an access channel between the client station and a packet-switched network, the method comprising carrying out the functions within the access channel.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein determining the size-based cost comprises multiplying a charging rate by the size of the web content.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the web content is defined by a set of markup language, and wherein adding the indication of the size-based cost in conjunction with the hyperlink comprises adding into the set of markup language, adjacent to the hyperlink, display text indicative of the size-based cost.

20-25. (Cancelled)

26. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the communication path extends from the content server, over a packet-switched network, and through an access channel to the client station, the method further comprising:

carrying out at least the adding within the access channel.